



Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of
The City Literary Institute held on 11 May 2021, 12-1pm
Via Zoom video (Covid-19)

Governors Present:

Penny Allen	Colin Jones
Lucy Arnold-Courtney (<i>from item 21/32</i>)	Simon Judge
Tim Bolderson	Christine Kinnear
Edward Breen (Staff Governor)	Mark Malcomson (Principal)
Jane Cooper (Deputy Chair)	Michael Simmonds
Jon Gamble	Paula Smith
Clancy Gebler Davies (Student Governor)	Jill Westerman
Moira Gibb (Chair)	

In attendance – Phil Chamberlain (Executive Director, External Engagement); Paul Evans (Chief Financial Officer/Co-Managing Director); Julie Gilbert (Executive Director, People), Wendy McKaig (Vice Principal/Co-Managing Director) – *all from item 21/32*

Clerk: Katrina O’Sullivan

Standing items

21/29 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received. The Chair welcomed governors to a shorter Governing Body agenda and meeting in order to allow sufficient time for the Annual Governors’ Away Day taking place afterwards. She added that the majority of the items had been scrutinised at Committee level and she had confidence in the work undertaken within those Committees; however, she encouraged governors to speak up if they felt more time was required on any agenda item.

21/30 Declarations of Interest

Jon Gamble made his usual declaration as a Trustee at WEA, but there was no conflict of interest to record.

21/31 Membership

The Governance & People Committee was pleased to report that the online interview process had gone well and wished to recommend the appointment of Lucy Arnold-Courtney to the Governing Body to serve one term (of four years) from 11 May 2021 – with the opportunity to stand for a second term in May 2025; and also agree that Lucy be invited to serve as a member of the Audit & Risk Committee. The Board **approved** Lucy’s appointment as set out in the report and felt Lucy’s skills and expertise would be a tremendous asset to City Lit’s Governing Body.

Lucy was welcomed to the Board.

21/32 Minutes of the previous meeting

An amendment had been received prior to the meeting and re-circulated to the Governing Body. The re-circulated minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021 were **approved** as an accurate record.

21/33 Matters Arising Not Appearing Elsewhere

There were no matters arising not appearing elsewhere.

21/34 Principal's update

The Chair informed governors that the usual College Update report had purposefully been deferred to the July meeting to allow more time for the Annual Away Day session. She also took the opportunity to congratulate the Principal on his 10th anniversary as Principal/CEO of City Lit.

The Principal informed the Board that the College had trialled some small class groups in the building before the Easter break – these had been some of the longer art courses that required studio access – and this had been successful. Further to that, in line with the Government's next unlocking roadmap date, which coincided with the College's start of term on 12 April 2021, some courses that had not been able to do well online, ie the Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Wellbeing and Learning Disabilities areas had been brought back to the building. The numbers of students returning had been capped in line with social distancing measures so, whilst not being financially profitable, it had been successful in bringing students back to the building and building confidence. The Principal confirmed that at each Government unlocking stage the College aimed to slowly remove the capped numbers for those courses, but keep the courses doing well online, such as Languages, online. A concern was the common student spaces as these could create logjams and the priority was keeping students and staff safe.

The Principal stated that he had expected the online courses to dip slightly as the unlocking dates were opened and the weather improved and, anecdotally, evidence from other businesses had experienced this also. However, term had begun well in person and online and finances had improved due to effective cost management and the success of online.

Julie Gilbert was working through the detail of a major staff survey sent to all staff and predominately addressed staff wellbeing/the support they have received from the College. The survey had been undertaken in collaboration with the unions and the overarching themes would be shared with staff and governors.

The Principal expressed that Queen's Speech was that afternoon and confirmed that Phil Chamberlain's next Political Review email would report on what this had entailed.

The FE Commissioner's team would be returning in mid-June and Management continued to make progress on their recommendations; the 2021/22 budget would also have been finalised before their visit.

Finally, the Principal informed governors that the ESFA had recently introduced 'Annual Strategic Conversations' with Colleges. City Lit's meeting with the ESFA was due to be held in mid-July with Management and the Chair - more would follow about that when it had taken place.

Reports

Items from Committees

21/35 Finance & Commercial Committee (FCC) Chair's Key Points – 26/4/21

The Board noted the FCC Chair's Key Points and would continue the conversation further within the confidential agenda.

21/36 Quality Committee Chair's Key Points – 27/4/21

The Board noted the Quality Committee Chair's Key Points. Tim Bolderson additionally highlighted that members had a useful and robust conversation about Safeguarding at the College. Furthermore, the Committee had concluded that it was satisfied that the approach that City Lit was taking was sensible, measured, practical and felt confident that the correct systems and responsibilities were in place and the supporting communication was appropriate.

Tim concluded by informing governors that there continued to be a substantial amount of work being undertaken by the Quality team to move the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) forward and support the tutors/students and the Committee had acknowledged these significant efforts.

21/37 Safeguarding update and Safeguarding Policy

Wendy McKaig spoke to her report which invited the Governing Body to confirm the College’s approach towards Safeguarding, Prevent and how the College continued to meet its legal duty. The Board reviewed the report and was content to endorse the approach and felt that the focus on the College’s duty of care was appropriate, and effective safeguarding process were clearly in place. Additionally, the Safeguarding Policy was well written and the ‘guidelines for writing tutors’ was clear, reassuring and framed proactively and positively.

The Governing Body approved the update to the Safeguarding Policy.

21/38 Teacher Assessed Grades Policy

Wendy McKaig explained that this summer every centre was required to have a Centre Policy for determining GCE/GCSE teacher assessed grades. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) published a template that addressed all the elements that the policy needed to cover. She explained that for City Lit this did not affect a large number of courses – four groups for GCSE and two A Level groups – but it was essential to have rigour in the process.

The Governing Body approved the Teacher Assessed Grades Policy.

21/39 Governance & People Committee (G&PC) Chair’s Key Points – 29/4/21

The Board noted the G&PC Chair’s Key Points. The Chair highlighted that the Committee had received a thorough People report from Julie Gilbert and expressed that the HR team were carrying out a fantastic amount of work to support the College and wellbeing of the staff.

The Chair added that she had left the Committee meeting when it discussed the recruitment of the Chair process; but the Deputy Chair would be in touch with governors shortly to discuss the possibility of holding a Governing Body Chair Search session.

21/40 Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference

The Chair reminded governors that the Board had agreed the formation of a small Task and Finish Group to support and challenge Management in developing the best possible arrangements for the College, post-Covid, leading to the production of a new College Strategy. This would include, but not be restricted to, the implications of a large digital offer. To that end, the Task & Finish Group had its first meeting on 28 April 2021 whereby its draft Terms of Reference were reviewed and amended and were being recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

Governors commented that the conversations during the afternoon’s Annual Governors’ Away Day may also have an impact on the Task & Finish Group’s purpose, and it would be important for the Task & Finish Group to take into consideration whether the options presented were deliverable and how the options would impact on the College’s finances. The Chair agreed that it was a good challenge for the Task and Finish Group and these points would be extracted from the Away Day conversations for the Task & Finish Group to consider.

The Governing Body approved the Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference.

21/41 Date of the next meeting:

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 13 July 2021. The Government announcement in the coming weeks would help determine whether the July meeting would be in the building or remain on Zoom.

Chair.....

Date.....